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TWO LETTERS

TO THE

EDITOR

OF THE

CHRISTIAN'S MAGAZINE.

BY A CHURCHMAN.

Be calm in arguing, for fierceness makes error a fault, and truth discourtesy. HERBERT.

Refellere sine pertinacia, et refelli sine iracundia, parati sumus. CICERO.

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TWO LETTERS, &c.

SIR,

SOME weeks since, I was favoured by a friend with the perusal of the first number of the Christian's Magazine. That part of it which reviews certain passages in Dr. HOBART's *Companion for the Altar*, in a particular manner, arrested my attention. The observations which you have made upon these passages have a very specious appearance, and are extremely well calculated *ad captandum vulgus;* for they are an appeal rather to prejudice and passion than to reason and fact. What can be better adapted to excite displeasure in the breasts of Presbyterians, than to tell them that Episcopalians exclude them from salvation? *Episcopacy* or *Perdition*, according to your statement, is the doctrine of some Episcopalians; and this you pronounce with great positiveness. "Positiveness," says Dean SWIFT, "is a good quality for preachers and orators," [*and for disputants also*] "because, he that would obtrude his thoughts and reasons upon a multitude, will convince others the more as he appears convinced himself." But, Sir, all that you have said is, really and truly, *vox et præterea nihil.* The assertion is your own creature—it has no existence in the *Companion for the Altar;* nor do I believe it ever entered into the mind of Dr. HOBART. No, Sir, his creed is of a very different nature; embracing much more of the human race than I suspect your's does. Suspect, do I say? Than your's *most assuredly* does. Are you not a Calvinist? Do you not believe in election, and (what is enough to fill the soul with "deep-toned horror") in its counterpart, reprobation? Notwithstanding this damnatory principle, you very

modestly exclaim against Dr. HOBART, for excluding from salvation dissenters from Episcopacy. Were it true that *he did so*, it would be nothing to your reprobating *scheme*.* But it is not true. He believes that dissenters of every denomination, who believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, and live "righteously, soberly, and godly," will receive forgiveness for their honest and involuntary error with respect to Episcopacy, and will be admitted into that kingdom, from which error will for ever be excluded. He goes much farther than this: he extends the Saviour's blood to the very heathen; believing that "in every nation, he that feareth God, and worketh righteousness, is accepted with him"—accepted through *him* whom they know not. Will you assent to this? I doubt it; because Calvinists, generally speaking, exclude the virtuous heathen from salvation. He also believes that all children will be saved; those who are baptized, in a covenant way, and those who are not baptized, by uncovenanted mercy. Does this meet your approbation? I am persuaded it does not; because, it is common for Calvinists to assert, that none but *elect* children will be saved. Now, I will appeal to any man of

* "When we have compared the great body of mankind, that are actually living in communion with the Episcopal Church in the four quarters of the globe; when we have considered the great extent of the Roman and Greek churches, together with that of the other Protestant Episcopal Churches in Europe; and from thence have turned our eyes to Asia, where it is supposed there are more Christians of different denominations living in communion with the Episcopal Church, than are perhaps in Europe; the greatest part of the more famous Greek Church being still to be found in that quarter; and when to these members of the Episcopal Church we add the great number of Christians now called *Copbtes*, living under their Patriarch in Africa; besides the Episcopalians in America, who now form a very considerable body: When, I say, we have taken these circumstances into consideration, we shall be able to judge what doctrine deals out perdition"—The doctrine of Dr. HOBART "which extends salvation *(in a regular covenant way)* to millions, or that which, comparatively speaking, confines it to tens." Daubeny's Appendix, Letter 6th.

common sense, which creed is the more amiable; and to the Bible, which comprehends the more verity. I should not fear a favourable decision, to whichsoever you would appeal.

It would, Sir, have been an easy matter for you to have stated briefly and perspicuously, what Dr. H. has said on the subject of Episcopacy in his *Companion for the Altar;* but, as you have not found *that* so convenient a mode as the one you have taken in your *review*, I must take the liberty of doing it for you.

Dr. H. maintains that there are three orders or grades in the Christian Church, Bishops, Priests, and Deacons; that these orders were instituted by the Apostles, acting under the direction of the *Holy Ghost*, and that consequently they are of divine institution:—That to the first order the power of ordaining or of transmitting the priesthood, was committed; and that, of course, where that order is wanting, the apostolic ministry has failed; for, to him it appears impossible, that Presbyters, to whom the power of ordaining was never given, should convey a legal priesthood; as upon that supposition they must convey what they have not, which is palpable nonsense:—That those who reject Episcopacy without well weighing its evidence, and much more those who reject it from party spirit, temporal attachment, wilful obstinacy, or any unworthy motive whatsoever, are exceedingly culpable:—That the church being thus constituted by its great Head and Founder, it is every man's duty to become a member of it; but if the evidence to others should not appear, upon strict and impartial examination, sufficiently strong to induce a belief that Episcopacy is of apostolic institution, acting from an honest heart, and living a pious life, their error will be forgiven, and their persons accepted. Now, Sir, I ask, whether this looks like *Episcopacy* or *Perdition?* To me it looks like a happy union of firmness of opinion, with charity and benevolence.

But it seems this way of going to heaven by God's ex-

traordinary goodness in forgiving error and rewarding piety, does not answer your expectation. "The relief," you tell us, "is not worth accepting." And you give some curious reasons for rejecting it. "In the first place, so much is necessary to constitute involuntary error, that the instances in which the plea could be substantiated would be rare indeed." Do you really suppose this to be the case when the *Almighty* is the judge of involuntary error? This is strange divinity—it does not savour much of a "master in Israel." You go on; "access to means of instruction precludes it effectually." What, Sir! cannot a person mistake the force of evidence, and, in consequence, reject Episcopacy with the greatest sincerity? We give *you* credit for rejecting it in the sincerity of your heart. *You* certainly have had "access to means of instruction." Is your sincerity on that account to be doubted? Are you, therefore, effectually precluded from involuntary error? I really should not have suspected that you would assert, that a man who has had "access to means of instruction," cannot honestly maintain an error. I presume, that you have given your congregation abundant instruction upon the solacing doctrines of election and reprobation; but are there none who reject these doctrines? And will you say, that such men are not sincere in their unbelief? Is their "retreat cut off" from the shelter of honest mistake? Will you positively pronounce, that their error is wilful? I hope you are not so far gone in uncharitableness! Well, then, if you are determined to reject Dr. H.'s charitable opinion, that you are honest in your error with respect to Episcopacy, and his belief that your piety will be accepted, you ought to give much better reasons for doing it than saying, (which in effect you do), one man cannot determine the honesty of another; for this is totally irrelevant to the point; because *God*, not *man*, is the judge; and also saying, that instruction precludes the plea of involuntary error, which is palpably erroneous. But, as if you are not suffi-

ciently involved in difficulties, you go on to say, "We have no ground to expect even this very precarious mercy, but the charitableness of Mr. [*Dr.*] H. and his brethren." "Warrant from the word of God," [*for extending this mercy to us*] "they have produced none, and have none to produce." Stop, Sir, if you please. We *have* sufficient warrant from the word of God to believe, that your involuntary error will be pardoned, and your piety accepted. "The pure in heart shall see God." [Who will say how far he may proceed in error without forfeiting eternal life?] "God accepteth a man according to what he hath;" that is, according to the light and duly improved talents he hath; and not according to "what he hath not;" and much more to the same purpose. You tell us farther;—"the very idea of such an escape is repugnant to that of an indispensable condition. No; if the condition be indispensable, they who reject it must perish. And if they who reject it may still be saved, it is not indispensable; otherwise the definition might run thus: an indispensable condition is that which may be dispensed with. The alternative then is, *Episcopacy* or *Perdition*. Prove this, and there is but one way for us—rush into the arms of the Episcopal Church, and the sooner the better." Now, Sir, I think it is rather hard that we should be called upon to prove that which we have never asserted, and to fortify, either by reason or scripture, what we do not believe. This is as unreasonable as your doctrine of reprobation, which condemns a man for doing what he could not avoid, and for omitting what he could not do. If God be a hard master upon *this* principle, you cannot be a reasonable controvertist upon *that*.

How easy is it to give plausibility to error, and positiveness to assertion. Thus you tell us, that Dr. H.'s charitableness to anti-Episcopalians involves him in this contradition, that "an indispensable condition is that which may be dispensed with." But is it possible that a man of your

capacity did not perceive, that what is an indispensable condition in some cases, is not so in others? God binds us to a strict observance of his institutions, as the ordinary means of salvation. He has commanded us to be baptized, and to partake of the holy eucharist. Is not this, taken as a general position, our indispensable duty? But are there no reasonable, no necessary exceptions? May not a person be, during his whole life, in such a situation as to be precluded from partaking of these holy ordinances? But if not thus situated, do you believe that a pious man cannot possibly entertain any misconception of this indispensable duty? If you do, what is to become of the people called Quakers? The duty, if we may judge from the language of scripture, is indispensable; for there are no exceptions mentioned, even of reasonable and necessary cases; yet I dare not say, that God has indispensably bound himself to exclude for ever from his presence, those who do not partake of those holy sacraments, when it proceeds from an honest, involuntary error. I dare not say that the Quakers will all be damned.

This, then, is the sense in which Dr. H. used the word "indispensable;" and this is the sense in which we must always use it, when applied to positive institutions. Where, I ask, is the contradiction? I see none.

And now that I have mentioned this denomination of professing Christians, give me leave to ask you, whether you view them as forming an apostolic church? Can there be such a church as Christ instituted, without sacraments and a ministry? From what you have said in your review, you must reply, "there cannot." This was also the opinion of that respectable body of *Presbyterian Divines* which met at Westminster. They assert in their *Jusdivinum*, &c. "No ministry, no church." Now, Sir, what will you say with respect to the Quakers? Will you say that "no repentance toward God—no faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ—no conformity to his image—no zeal for his glory

can be of any avail? The simple fact of their separation from the authorized, that is to say, from the *Presbyterian priesthood*, mars their religion, and renders it stark naught." Perhaps you will say (indeed say it you must, unless you will send them to perdition), "I hope and believe that God will pardon their error, and accept their piety." And is it come to this? What we say to *you*, are *you* obliged to say to *them?* Good, Sir! "first cast out the beam out of thine own eye, before thou sayest to thy brother, let me cast out the mote out of thine eye."

There is another passage in your review, which the Quaker may completely retort upon you, upon the principle, "no ministry, no church." "We are very sure," may he say, "that particular views of external church order are not the hinging points of salvation. Whether a man shall go to heaven or to hell, will be decided by another inquiry than whether he was an Episcopalian, a Presbyterian, an Independent," or a Quaker. "The scriptures have fixed that inquiry to this point, whether he was a believer in the Lord Jesus Christ, or not. *He that believeth and is baptized* [by the way, here is something more than *believing* required] *shall be saved; and he that believeth not shall be damned.* Again; *Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved.* The reverse is, *he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed on the name of the only begotten Son of God.* According to these passages, "faith in the Lord Jesus, as he is exhibited in the gospel, is the indispensable condition of salvation," and not the participation of ordinances by a valid ministry. Now, Sir, I think that these passages are fairly retorted upon you, upon that avowed principle of Presbyterianism, "no ministry, no church."

You tell us, in the above quotation, that "faith in the Lord Jesus is the indispensable condition of salvation." Now, it appears to me, in order to avoid being involved in a contradiction in the application of the word "indispens-

able," you must assert, that Jew, Gentile, and Mahometan, man, woman, and child, from the Christian era down to the present time, and to the time when they shall be converted to the faith of Christ, will be eternally damned; otherwise the definition of an indispensable condition might run thus: "An indispensable condition is that which may be dispensed with." If you will venture upon the above dreadful assertion, you will undoubtedly stand clear of contradiction; but, if you are not willing to plunge countless millions of the human race into endless misery, you must explain the word "indispensable" as I have done; and then, I hope, you will give up your charge of contradiction against Dr. H.

Although the case of the people called Quakers is sufficient to answer my purpose, yet I conceive it may not be amiss to ask you, whether you think the *Independents* in this country and Great-Britain, have the form and authority of apostolic churches? Can they have a ministry when they avow the people to be the source of it? They do not pretend to a succession, which you maintain, and without which it may be demonstrated, there can be no Christian ministry? Do these form apostolic churches, or do they not? Every true Presbyterian must affirm, they do not. Upon the principles of the *Westminster Divines*, they must certainly be condemned. Well, Sir! how are you to come off with the Independents? In no other way that I can see, but that which you must take with the Quakers, and which *we* take with *you*. There is no medium in this case—either a church, or no church. A church may have errors; it may be corrupt; but preserving the essentials, it is still a church. But a Christian ministry belongs to the very essence of a church; and no ministry deserves that appellation, in your opinion, as well as mine, which does not derive its authority from Christ by succession. The people are entirely out of the question. There is not a single passage of scripture which has the least shadow of granting to them the power

of sending labourers into Christ's vineyard. Notwithstanding these truths, the Independents will take all this in very high dudgeon; and much more so from *you* than from *us*. They have nothing to do then, upon your principles, but to take your own words, and say; "Before the authors *who figure in the Christian's Magazine* can be justified in writing a syllable which only looks towards such a conclusion, they ought to be perfectly certain of their premises. To unchurch with a dash of the pen all the *Independents* under heaven, and cast their members indiscriminately into a condition worse than that of the very heathen, is, to say the least of it, a most dreadful excommunication; and if not clearly enjoined by the word of God, as criminal as it is dreadful."*

* After writing the above, I turned to Mr. M'Leod's Catechism, in which, page 31, I find these words: "Seeing Independents relinquish their claim of right of ordaining, each congregation its own pastor, by giving up the work into the hands of those who are ordained, the ordinances administered in the Independent churches are held valid." Now, *one judice*, this is very extraordinary reasoning from a man who holds the *divine origin* of Presbytery, and the necessity of uninterrupted succession. Does an Independent congregation give up its right of ordaining, by appointing a *clerical* committee to do the business? The very appointment proves the claim, and the ministers who receive it, by the reception, acknowledge the right of the people. The circumstance of the ordainers wearing black coats and bands, surely makes no difference in the case. Nor does the circumstance of their being decent workmen from education and habit, which is the reason of the peoples' appointing them, give them the smallest degree of authority independent of the people. They are *appointed*—they are *delegated*; and, therefore, the authority lies in the congregation. Besides, how in this case can there be any succession, which Mr. M'Leod holds necessary to a Christian ministry? Let us state the case fairly. Christ commissioned the Apostles to minister in holy things. The Apostles commissioned others; and so downwards till the rise of independency, which was long after the era of the Reformation. That sect asserted the power of the people to ordain, and they actually *did* ordain in numerous instances, both in Old and New-England. Now, I ask Mr. M'Leod, what is become of the succession? Is ordination by laymen valid? If not, could those who

What has been put into the mouth of the Quaker and Independent, may, with equal propriety, be put into the mouth of the Baptist and other sectaries. They have the same right (if there be any right in the case) to be offended with *you*, that *you* have to be offended with *us*. And will you, to avoid giving them offence, admit the validity of their ordination? If so, you must go on, and admit the validity of the ordinations of the sixty sects,* which sprang from Presbytery, in the pious reign of OLIVER CROMWELL. At this rate, Christ left his church without any government—made no provision for the transmission of the priesthood—established no criteria by which his church can be distinguished—left it to the people's whims, ignorance, prejudice, passion, interest, to give it what shape and features they please. This would answer the purpose of Deists completely; for it would not require any superfluity of genius to prove, that out of such a mixture of inconsistent, heterogeneous parts, it would be impossible to form any church, that would not excite the most perfect contempt.†

But I need not be apprehensive, that you will thus debase the Church of Christ. You appear to be as strict as we are in maintaining, that there can be no church without a ministry, and no ministry without a succession from Christ. But this correct principle subjects *you* to much embarrass-

received such an ordination validly ordain others? Certainly not. I am really desirous to know how Mr. M'LEOD will get rid of this inconsistency.

* Edwards' Gangræna.

† All the churches of God are united into one by the unity of discipline and government, by virtue whereof the same Christ ruleth in them all. For they have all the same pastoral guides appointed, authorized, sanctified, and set apart by the appointment of God, by the direction of the Spirit, to lead and direct the people of God in the same way of salvation. As, therefore, there is no church where there is no order, no ministry, so where the same order and ministry are, there is the church. Bishop Pearson on the Creed, p. 513.

ment; for the Quaker, the Baptist, the Independent and others, can retort upon you, fairly and unanswerably, all your declamation, and the little that has the appearance of reasoning against us. The principle being acknowledged by us both, we stand upon the same footing as to consequences, with other denominations. After all your outcry against Episcopalians, your claim for *Presbytery* is, to a tittle, as high as theirs for *Episcopacy*. What strange conduct is this? Is it not inconsistent? Is it not provoking?

This, Sir, is not the first instance of Presbyterians making a violent outcry against Episcopalians, when they were both involved in the consequences of the same principle. Till after the restoration of CHARLES II. the doctrine of toleration does not appear to have been well understood by either party. The dissenters indeed, particularly the Presbyterians, made a great outcry about the liberty of conscience; but when Episcopacy was demolished, and Presbytery took its place—Oh then! the matter was entirely different, and the answer to the Independents, who were continually harassing the Presbyterians, was somewhat like that of the judge in the fable—" if it was *your* ox that gored *my* cow, that is a very different affair." Then the Presbyterians changed their tune, and gave to toleration all the hard names they could think of. It was " a cursed thing—it would ruin the Christian church. The saints (meaning themselves no doubt) would have no peace upon that principle;" and a great deal more to that purpose, which you may see in STILLINGFLEET's *Unreasonableness of Separation*. In like manner, you are making a violent outcry against Dr. H.'s exclusive notion of church government, when you yourself hold an equally exclusive principle. If *we* are intolerant towards *you*, *you* are equally so towards Quakers, &c. Were *they* to take your words against *us*, and apply them to *your* exclusive principle, " no Presbytery, no church," I do not know how you could

extricate yourself in a better manner, than by adopting the same equitable consideration with the above-mentioned judge. "If *we* gore *you* with our exclusive principle, it is a very different matter from Episcopalians goring *us* with *theirs*."*

But, as if you were conscious that all you have said would not effectually answer your purpose, you make an appeal, upon another ground, to prejudice and passion. You intimate, in pretty clear terms, that the lives of Presbyterians are more correspondent with the gospel, than the

* The following extracts from Mr. M'Leod's Catechism merit attention:

"Q. What are the advantages of the Presbyterian mode of ordination?

"*A.* It is of divine appointment, and usually accompanied with God's blessing.

"Q. Is he, who, without regular ordination, takes it upon himself to exercise the power of a gospel minister, to be recognized as an officer of Jesus Christ?

"*A.* A person who is not ordained to office by a Presbytery, has no right to be received as a minister of Jesus Christ: his administration of ordinances is invalid: no divine blessing is promised upon his labours: it is rebellion against the Head of the church to support him in his pretensions: Christ has excluded him in his providence from admission through the ordinary door; and if he has no evidence of miraculous power to testify his extraordinary mission, he is an impostor." Again; "Presbyterial order is indeed divinely appointed for the perfecting of the saints, and all are bound to submit to it." Further; "the Presbyterian plan of church government is alone of divine right."

Now, the Quaker, and the lay preachers of different denominations, will laugh at all this. "Open your eyes (they will say to the author of the above assertions) and you will see hundreds brought to a saving knowledge of Jesus Christ by lay preaching. How presumptuous then is it for you to tell us, that we are rebels against the Head of the church, because the hands of a Presbytery have not been upon our heads! Christ approves, or he would not bless our labours. What you and your brethren say to Episcopalians, we say to you—'faith is the hinging point of salvation—*believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved.*" The answer that Mr. M'Leod would make to this, we can make to him, and to the Editor of *the Christian's Magazine;* and thus we shall completely quit scores.

lives of Episcopalians. This intimation, you tell us, is "given reluctantly and with pain." I hope the pain was not very great, and that, by this time, you have got rid of it. Be that as it may, what would you infer from your superior saintship? Is it that Episcopacy cannot be the government of Christ's Church? Will you risk your reputation, as a logician, upon that inference? If you will not, to what purpose compare our lives with yours? If the inference be not legitimate, you have thrown away a page of your review; but if it be legitimate, then I hope you will not be offended at my "urging you over the precipice," by means of the consequences. You know, Sir, that the Quakers make as great pretensions to purity and piety as *you* do; and I believe they have as good a claim to the character, as you have. They will not hesitate to accompany you "from temple to temple—from house to house—from closet to closet;" and they will agree, "that in proportion as there is little or much of *pure and undefiled religion* in them, their grade in the scale of Christian churches, shall be low or high." Does it follow from this, that the principles of the Quakers are true? Does it afford any ground of presumption, that theirs are better than yours? I am not afraid that you will say it does. You well know, that principles are to be tested in a very different manner; scripture truths by scripture evidence, and every other species of truth by its proper evidence. Some "hold the truth in unrighteousness," while others are erroneous in their opinions to a considerable degree, and yet are virtuous and pious in their lives. No case (in my opinion) is more in point than that of the Quakers.

I might also tell you, Sir, that the Methodist, the Baptist, and others, will very readily travel over the same ground with you, and it is extremely probable, that you will not leave them far behind. But it is really mispending time to reply to such observations. Your project is grossly indelicate—superlatively preposterous. Yet, it will

not be without its effect upon many of your readers. It will delight their self-complacency—it will charm their overweening opinion of their piety. To a mind in such a state, reasoning is idle—proof is impertinent. The language of such superior sanctity will be,—"Stand by—I am holier than thou."

Thus, it is evident, that this mode of distinguishing truth from falsehood, is not at all adapted to that end; nor has it any thing whatever to recommend it, not even novelty; for it has been the constant cant of refiners and schismatics, from the very days of the Apostles. The numerous sects which deformed the primitive church, and the still more numerous which deform the modern, never failed to justify their secession, by alleging a want of piety in those from whom they separated; and this satisfies the thoughtless multitude, which ever *was*, and ever *will* be led away by specious pretences. But that *you*, Sir, a man of sense, a proficient in classical learning, which generally improves the delicacy of the mind—a man acquainted with human nature—with the history of the Christian church, and particularly (no doubt) with the history of the different sects in the unhappy reign of CHARLES I. that you should countenance such a pretence, is strange indeed.—Poor, poor human nature!—Pænitet! Pudet! Piget!

I have imbibed, Sir, some how or other, several very old-fashioned notions. One is, that where there are great pretensions to religion, there is very little of it; except, perhaps, in weak minds. I have always observed, that the shallow stream runs murmuring along; but that the deep river moves silently in its course. Religion, to my mind,

> ——"Is not obtrusive, but retired,
> the more desirable."

Another of my old-fashioned notions is, that where there is a bitter, malignant, fiery spirit, it is in vain for

those under its influence to talk about religion. With this sentiment, I never could read the history of CHARLES I. with any degree of patience. The high pretensions of the Puritans, to a cast of piety far superior to that of the Episcopalians; the lofty titles which they gave themselves, and the dreadful epithets which they bestowed upon the established clergy; their turbulent and uncharitable temper, the spirit of division and fanaticism which they cherished, attended with violence and bitterness of language, and an intolerant persecuting humour towards all who were not fanatics, fill almost every page of the history of that black period. Nor were these things confined to the rabble. No; the Puritan clergy, and a number of laymen of distinction, led the way. Even the celebrated MILTON was one of those fanatical leaders. Read the following invective of that great genius against the Bishops of the Church of England. "But they that, by the impairing and diminishing of the true faith, the distresses and servitude of their country, aspire to high dignity, rule and promotion here, after a shameful end in this life (which God grant them!) shall be thrown down eternally into the darkest and deepest gulf of hell, where, under the despiteful controul, the trample and scorn of all the other damned, who, in the anguish of their torture, shall have no other ease, than to exercise a raving and bestial tyranny over them as their slaves and negroes, they shall remain in that plight for ever, the basest, the lowermost, the most dejected, most underfoot, and down-trodden vassals of perdition."* "If," says one, "it were put to my option, whether I would be an ideot, without a single faculty of mind, or a single sense of the body; or whether I would have MILTON's imagination, attended with this fiery spirit, I should not hesitate one moment to determine." This flood of cursing was poured from the lips of superior piety, such as carnal Epis-

* Milton's Treatise on Reformation.

copalians seldom attain. Yes! JOHN MILTON was a pious man—so were they all, all pious men.

But perhaps you will say, we live in better times. That fiery spirit of fanaticism which disgraced the unhappy period above mentioned, has been long extinguished, and all denominations of Christians cherish a more peaceful and charitable disposition. Would to God it were so! But there is too much reason to think, that the same inveterate spirit against Episcopacy, still exists in the breasts of dissenters—there wants nothing but a great occasion to call it forth. Take the following proof. In the year 1788, a Baptist preacher by the name of ROBINSON, a man of talents, residing at Cambridge, in England, "put out a syllabus of lectures on the principles of *non-conformity*. He speaks in the person of Jesus Christ, upon the tribunal of judgment at the last day, and supposes him presenting to the world on that tremendous occasion, his faithful servants the *non-conformist* ministers, as the great objects of his favour, and, at the same time, sending off those holy tyrants the Bishops of the Church of England, into everlasting fire, with that dreadful sentence—*depart*, &c. "And what," says my author, "are the Bishops to be damned for? Because they could not approve of *non-conformity*? A religion of negatives! They saw enough of its fruits to dislike it in former times, from its first appearance in this kingdom. But they did not see, as we do now, that its end is infidelity, to which it hath been tending for many years past, and hath now attained it in the writings of Dr. PRIESTLEY, and the Unitarian association. These lectures, with the dreadful sentence of damnation to the Bishops, were approved by the Easter association of *Essex*, at *Harlow*, and recommended by the sister churches by order of all. Of what character must these sister churches be, if they are of the same spirit with brother ROBINSON? Surely they are not chaste virgins, presentable to a meek and merciful Saviour, who prayed for his murderers; but unmer-

ciful harlots, cursing and damning the established church for retaining Episcopacy. Had there been no non-conformity, the poor Bishops might have escaped like other men, and have been entitled to their chance of mercy through the merits of their Redeemer, who died for them, and for all men, and sent forth the first Bishops by his own immediate authority. What would such non-conformists do, if they had it in their power, who are provoked to such unwarrantable ravings under the present most mild and moderate state of the Church of England?"*

These, Sir, are no great proofs of the superior piety of dissenters. In my opinion, humility, meekness, and charity, would give them a better title to the character of superior piety, than reviling, cursing and bitterness. It is not he, who, with pharisaical arrogance, lifts up his eyes to heaven, and says—"God! I thank thee that I am not as other men—nor as that publican," that will be justified. You well know what the Saviour of the world said of the despised publican—"I say unto you, this man went down to his house justified rather than the other." *This* is the tribunal to which we appeal; and not to men, who think more highly of themselves than they ought to think.

Of a piece with your *reluctant* and *painful* intimation, that Presbyterians are more virtuous and godly than Episcopalians, is your broad hint that *your* preachers are more evangelical than *ours*. What right you have to intimate any thing like that, I cannot conceive, as you never hear any sermons from our pulpits. And if you depend upon the reports of a few of your own people, who do, perhaps, occasionally step into our churches, I object against *them* most decidedly; because, in general, they are Calvinists, and, with such, evangelical and Calvinistical are synonymous terms. Besides, there is so much humour in hearers with respect to preaching, that it is not uncommon for one

* Rev. William Jones' Essay on the Church.

highly to extol a sermon, which another reprobates. But what, Sir, is *your* idea of evangelical preaching? I wish you had told us; we could then speak more to the point. Is not that man an evangelical preacher, who tells his people, that they are fallen, sinful creatures—that they must repent, turn from their evil ways, and be renewed in the spirit of their minds by the operation of the Holy Ghost—that they must renounce themselves, and expect salvation only by God's grace through the merits of Christ—that they must be sanctified throughout soul, body, and spirit—walk in all the ordinances of the Lord blameless, and after they have done all, acknowledge themselves unprofitable servants? If this be evangelical preaching, then this is the preaching we generally hear in our pulpits, and we hear these great truths delivered in an earnest and affectionate manner. But, if you mean to take into the idea of evangelical preaching, the doctrines of election, reprobation, and the perseverance of the saints, you are certainly right—*your* preachers are more evangelical than *ours*. Against these doctrines our clergy set their faces, and unanimously declare to their people, that "there is one God, and one Mediator between God and man, the man Christ Jesus, who gave himself a ransom for all, to be testified in due time"—that "the grace of God which bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men," and that "he, by the grace of God, tasted death for every man." These are the consolatory doctrines which our ministers preach; and not that dreadful and unscriptural doctrine of reprobation, which has driven numbers to despair, and is well calculated to freeze the heart's blood of every hearer.

But, Sir, were it true that our ministers do not preach the essential truths of christianity,* we have a counterba-

* "It is not easy to speak without severity of a charge so destitute of truth, and so entirely void of charity. Could it be imagined that they whose ministry is so injuriously contemned, preach the same Saviour

lance to this, which, those who worship God in your way have not—I mean the excellent liturgy of our church. In this *form of sound words*, all the great doctrines of salvation are inculcated over and over again. We have also the scriptures read to us in the lessons, the psalms, and the epistles and gospels. This we deem true evangelical preaching—it is God himself preaching to us, and not frail, fallible man. But this, it seems, does not suit those who are taught to despise a liturgy as "restraining the spirit," and to forego the reading of the scriptures in the church, because they can read them at home. A sermon is the great *desideratum*, while "the voice of the charmer," *in the divine word*, is disregarded, "charm he never so wisely." But enough on this point.

Allow me now, before I make any observations on another part of your *review*, to return you thanks for your attack upon Episcopacy, and for the promise you have made, that the public shall know the grounds upon which it stands. This is just what we want—upon this hallowed point we are ready to meet you. We will decline *no* investigation—shrink from *no* assault. Episcopacy, we say, is a divine institution, and we will maintain it with such a cloud of testimonies from the primitive writers, and the holy scriptures, as will "make assurance doubly sure."

with their indiscreet opponents? That they teach to the full as largely the need which all men have of that grace, the issues of which Christ set wide to the world? That they appeal as humbly to his merits, to his atonement, and prevailing intercession as the ground of all their hope, and with the same reverence regard his word and sacraments as the pledges of salvation." Archdeacon Pott's Charge, A. D. 1797.

"It is one of the hacknied phrases of the day, calculated to lead weak people by the ear—that the clergy of the church are not gospel ministers. Whilst those who are distinguished," *in great humility*, "by the exclusive title of preachers of salvation by grace, like the gospellers of the last century, should rather be called preachers of absolute decrees, predestination, election, and faith without works." Daubeny's Appendix, p. 510.

I was in hopes, before I saw the *Christian's Magazine*, that Episcopacy would have been the only subject of dispute between us; but I find that you mean to discuss also the doctrine of election and the divine decrees. This, to be sure, has no particular bearing upon Episcopalians more than upon some other denominations, and, therefore, I might very well pass it over; but as it appears to me a very unreasonable and very unscriptural doctrine, it may not be amiss to say a few words upon it.

This subject you have introduced with a dilemma from the famous Calvinistic divine, Dr. Owen. The dilemma runs thus: "God imposeth his wrath due unto, and Christ underwent the pains of hell for, either all the sins of all men, or all the sins of some men; or some sins of all men." The latter branch of the disjunctive proposition, that Christ underwent the pains of hell for some sins of all men, is nothing to the purpose; for neither you nor I believe it. The dilemma then stands thus: "God imposeth his wrath due unto, and Christ underwent the pains of hell for, either all the sins of all men, or all the sins of some men." "The second," says the Doctor, "is that which we affirm, that Christ in their stead and room, suffered for all the sins of all the *elect* in the world. If the first, why then are not all freed from the punishment of all their sins?" To this question Christ himself gives a decisive answer—"Ye will not come unto me that ye may have life." Life then was procured for them.—"O Jerusalem, Jerusalem! How often would I have gathered you together as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings; but *ye would not*." Christ *would*, but they *would not*. Again; "They which were called were not worthy"—were shut out from the marriage of the Lamb. Why so? Because, "they would not come." Thus it appears from Christ's own words, that he died for the sins of all men, and then the assertion that "Christ died for the sins of the elect only," is false.

You certainly know, Sir, that no conclusion of a syllo-

gism can be deemed valid, when either of the premises wants proof. The Doctor gives no proof from scripture, that Christ's dying for all men involves the actual salvation of all men. His minor proposition therefore (were the dilemma reduced to a regular syllogism), is questionable. Consequently, his conclusion is illegitimate. But the Doctor is not satisfied with Christ's declaration ;—*ye will not come unto me that ye may have life*, which is the same as saying, ye will not believe in me. On this declaration is raised another dilemma. "This unbelief, is it a sin, or not?" Undoubtedly it is a sin. "If it be, then Christ underwent the punishment due to it, or not?" He certainly underwent the punishment due to it. "If so, then why must that hinder them more than their other sins for which he died, from partaking of the fruit of his death?" Justice demands, that those who *will not* accept Christ's atonement—who *will not* be indebted to him for life and salvation, should be excluded from the kingdom of heaven. As life eternal is attached to faith, because it is the principle of holiness, so death eternal is the punishment of unbelief, because it is productive of wickedness. But for this unbelief Christ died. *I would*, said he, to the unbelieving Jews, but *ye would not*. Yet in the face of this declaration, Dr. Owen assumes the position, that Christ did not intend the salvation of all men. When men reason, they should remember, that there are certain indispensable rules attending it; and that one of these rules is, *never to assume*. And thus ends the dilemma of that famous divine, whose "grasp was death."

It is really surprising that you, Sir, a man of sense and learning, should propose to your readers a dilemma that, in truth, has not a horn upon which a mere smatterer in logic could be hooked. How humiliating to human nature, that learned and unlearned, wise and simple, should be so much upon a level, when prejudice or passion sways them! "That was excellently observed, say I, when I

read a passage in an author where his opinion agrees with mine. When we differ, there I pronounce him mistaken."* This is, undoubtedly, the philosophy of the matter.

Will you, Sir, have the goodness to bear with me, while I offer to you a few texts of scripture to comment upon, in some future numbers of your magazine. I shall arrange them according to similarity of expression.

My first assortment is as follows: "God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved." John iii. 17. "Behold the Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world." John i. 29. "And he is the propitiation for our sins; and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world." 1 John ii. 2. "And we have seen and do testify that the Father sent the Son to be the Saviour of the world." John iv. 14. "For I came not to judge the world, but to save the world." John xii. 48. "For God was in Christ reconciling the world unto himself," &c. 2 Cor. v. 19. And many others of this sort.

The second assortment of scriptures runs thus: "Who gave himself a ransom for all." 1 Tim. ii. 6. "Because we thus judge, that if one died for all, then were all dead: And that he died for all, that they who live," &c. 2 Cor. v. 14, 15. "That he by the grace of God should taste death for every man." Heb. ii. 9. "Who will have all men to be saved," &c. 1 Tim. ii. 4. "Not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance." 2 Pet. iii. 9. "Therefore, as by the offence of one, the judgment came upon all men to condemnation, even so by the righteousness of one, the free gift came upon all men to justification of life." Rom. v. 18. With many others.

My third collection of texts is the following: "Destroy not him with thy meat for whom Christ died." Rom. xiv. 15. "And through thy knowledge shall the weak brother

* Swift's Thoughts on various Subjects.

perish for whom Christ died." 1 Cor. viii. 11. "Even denying the Lord that bought them, and bring upon themselves swift destruction." 2 Pet. ii. 1. "Of how much sorer punishment, suppose ye, shall he be thought worthy, who hath trodden under foot the Son of God, and hath counted the blood of the covenant, wherewith he was sanctified, an unholy thing, and hath done despite unto the spirit of grace?" Heb. x. 29. "Then his lord, after he had called him, said unto him, O thou wicked servant! I forgave thee all that debt, because thou desiredst me: Shouldest not thou also have had compassion on thy fellow servant? And his lord was wroth, and delivered him to the tormentors, till he should pay all that was due to him. So likewise shall my heavenly Father do unto you, if ye from your heart forgive not every one his brother their trespasses." Matt. xviii. 32, 33, &c.

In return for Dr. Owen's dilemma, I present to you, Sir, the following demonstration, with which, and a short view of Calvinism, I shall close this long letter.

If Christ died not for all men, then are not all men bound to believe in him for salvation. But all men *are* bound to believe in him for salvation. Therefore Christ died for all men.

The major proposition is so obvious to common sense, that I cannot suppose any man will hesitate to acknowledge the truth of it. The minor proposition—*all men are bound to believe in him for salvation*, is evident from the holy scriptures, which are as clear upon this point as the mid-day sun in an unclouded sky. "And the times of this ignorance God winked at: But now he commandeth *all men every where* to repent." Acts xvii. 30. If to *repent*, then certainly to believe in Christ. "And this is his commandment, that we should believe on the name of his Son Jesus Christ." 1 John iii. 23. [A hard commandment to the reprobates, who, were they to believe in him, would believe a lie, as, upon the Calvinistic principle, he did not

die for them. Horrible!] Again: As God commands all men to believe in Christ, so he threatens with damnation all those who do not believe in him. "He that believeth not shall be damned." Mark xvi. 16. "He that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him." John iii. 36; and several other texts of the same import.

Further: As God commands all men to believe in Christ—threatens all with death who do not believe—promiseth life and salvation to all who shall believe; so he suggests reasons and motives to encourage men to believe in Christ, or on himself through Christ, for salvation. Sometimes he mentions his great love to them, as in John iii. 16. Titus iii. 4, &c. Sometimes his mercy and compassion. Exod. xxxiv. 6. Luke i. 72, &c. Sometimes the delight and pleasure he takes in showing mercy. Micah vii. 18. Ezek. xxxiii. 11. Sometimes he gives them an oath for their greater security in his promises. Heb. vi. 17, 18. Luke i. 72, 73. Sometimes he expresses his desire of their salvation. 1 Tim. ii. 4. Ezek. xxxiii. 11. Sometimes his grief at their wicked courses. Ezek. xviii. 31. Jer. xliv. 4. Sometimes he declares the abundant provision he hath made for their salvation. Matt. xxii. 4. Heb. ix. 14. And sometimes he even condescends to the consideration, that glory will result to himself and to his grace, by men's believing, and their consequent salvation. Ephes. i. 12. Now, all these commands, threatenings, promises, and encouragements, proving, beyond the possibility of reasonable contradiction, the truth of the minor proposition, that *all men are bound to believe in Christ for salvation*, it follows irresistibly, that *Christ died for all men.*

As the Calvinistic system of divinity will, in all probability, be a subject of dispute as well as Episcopacy, I shall take the liberty, before I conclude, of drawing out that system, for the benefit of those who may not be very well acquainted with it. The following propositions are all to

be found in CALVIN's writings: The absolute and unconditional election or predestination of particular individuals to eternal salvation; and the equally absolute and unconditional reprobation of all the remaining part of mankind, without respect of persons. As preparatory to this divine act of predestination, it is maintained, that God fore-ordained the fall of man.* That in consequence of his fall, thus pre-ordained, the whole human race becoming a mass of corruption, it was decreed by God before the foundation of the world, to choose some out of this mass to be saved, and to leave the others to everlasting misery.† "For all," says he, "are not created under the same circumstances; but to some eternal life is pre-ordained, to others, eternal damnation."‡

To these principles must be added, the irresistibility of divine grace—the absolute impossibility of the elect's falling from grace—the making God the sole operator in the work of salvation, and, of consequence, man a mere machine; and what completes the horrid picture which CALVIN has given of that Being whose tender mercies are over all his works, he represents him as actually fitting the reprobates for the misery to which he has consigned them, by rendering them incapable of being profited by any means of grace whatever—by rendering them blind and stupid, and depriving them of the faculty of hearing his word to any advantage. "He directs his voice to them," says he, "for the purpose of their being made more deaf—He sets his light before them, in order that they may be rendered more blind—He holds forth doctrine to them, that they may be rendered more stupid by it—He applies a remedy, but not for the purpose of their being healed."‖

* Arcanum Dei consilium, quo præordinatus fuerat hominis lapsus. Calvin de prædest. p. 607.

† Deum ex perdita massa eligere et reprobare, &c. Ibid. p. 613.

‡ Non enim pari conditione creantur omnes, sed aliis vita eterna, aliis damnatio æterna præordinatur. Inst.

‖ Quemadmodum suæ erga electos vocationis efficacia salutem, ad

This, Sir, is the amiable system which you have to defend—" A system," to use the words of the learned JORTIN, " consisting of human creatures without liberty,* doctrines without sense, faith without reason, and a God without mercy."

quam externo consilio destinarat, perficit Deus; ita sua habet adversus reprobos judicia, quibus consilium de illis suum exæquatur. Quos ergo in vitæ contumeliam et mortis exitium creavit, ut iræ suæ organa forent, et severitatis exempla, eos, ut in finem suum perveniant, nunc audiendi verbi sui facultate privat, nunc ejus predicatione magis exçæcat et obstupefacit. Inst. lib. iii. cap. 24. sec. 2.

Vocem ad eos dirigit (Deus) sed ut magis obsurdescant; lucem accendit sed ut reddantur cæciores; doctrinam profert, sed qua magis obstupescant; remedium adhibet, sed ne sanentur. Ibid.

* " We have an immediate consciousness of a freedom of will within us; or of a power to act or forbear; to act this way, or the quite contrary in all matters of duty, as well as in all things indifferent. From whence the natural deduction of reason is, that our actions being free and voluntary, they must be imputable to us with that faculty. This free principle within us is so self-evident, that no reason or argument can render it more so. All attempt of proof for the corroboration of it is utterly needless, and serves only to perplex and confound the clearest evidence the mind is capable of for the truth of any thing: So that in all contention and debate relating to this point, as well as to what immediately depends on it, the last appeal for a final decision, must be to the immediate consciousness of the mind; and he who would not determine against absolute decrees and unconditional predestination, election and reprobation, from a discernment of freedom of will within himself, must be a corrupt judge, and blinded with prejudice; and is not capable of a full conviction from any other topic." Brown's proced. hum. understanding.

LETTER II.

SIR,

THE second number of the *Christian's Magazine* lies before me. The part in which I feel myself most interested, is, your *Review of the Essays on Episcopacy*. I have been for some time looking with a degree of impatience for this long threatened attack; and now that I have seen it, I can with sincerity say, that I do not perceive any impression that can possibly be made by it upon Episcopacy. That institution, for any thing you have said, will continue in perfect security. Nay, Sir, I must be so free as to tell you, that your observations fall short of my expectations. Not that I expected you would say any thing new upon the subject; for that, I am confident, is entirely out of the question: but I really supposed that your ingenuity would have given more plausibility to old fallacies, and more semblance of truth to gross errors. For this, however, I looked in vain: your second number has convinced me that the author of *Miscellanies*, in the *Albany Centinel*, has done as well as you will do. You indeed tell us, that "he did not take the matter by the right handle;" but with your leave, Sir, you argue pretty much as he did—that is, you infer from Presbyters being sometimes called Bishops, that there can be no higher order in the church than Presbyters. This his adversaries stigmatized as "wretched sophistry;" and I have not the least hesitation in declaring, that they could not have chosen a more appropriate term.

In the second page of the review you quote the *Layman*, saying, "the question of Episcopacy is a question

of fact, to be determined by a sound interpretation of the sacred volume." "In this," you say, "we join issue with him, and not only consent, but insist, that the question shall be decided by the scripture alone. But in fixing the sense of the scripture, their (the Fathers) authority is of no more weight with us than the authority of other uninspired men; that is, we regard not their opinion any further than it is supported by the strength of their reasonings. The written word is the perfect and exclusive rule of our faith." Here you shift the point in question. You confound the authority of the Fathers with respect to points of faith, with their testimony in regard to matters of fact. This is for ever the management of our adversaries in this dispute. When the Fathers are quoted by us to prove a matter of fact, then the exclamation is,—the Fathers! Why, the Fathers were as fallible as other men—*they* disputed as much upon points of faith as *we* do; there is, therefore, no dependence to be placed upon them. Now, Sir, is not this most contemptible sophistry? When the dispute is not about a point of faith, but a matter of fact, does that man reason who infers, that because the Fathers were fallible as to the former, they are not to be regarded as to the latter? If two or three men of different religious principles were to be called into a court of justice to bear testimony to a fact, and they were to agree perfectly in their evidence, what would the court say, were a lawyer on the opposite side to object to their evidence, that they did not agree in their religious sentiments—that one was a Calvinist, another an Arian, and the third a Socinian, and that therefore their testimony was not admissible? Would he not be treated with sovereign contempt? And are we to bear in this case, what in every other would be deemed insufferable? We are not children, I can assure you, Sir. We know as well as you do, what the nature of evidence is, and what the different species of evidence are. We know that a man may be orthodox in

points of faith, and yet bear false testimony; or be heterodox, and yet be a man of veracity. With a person who will not make this distinction, it is a hopeless business to enter into a controversy upon Episcopacy. But I have committed myself, to go through the subject: I must therefore bear the irksome task of detecting fallacies, and pointing out inconsistences.

When you quoted the *Layman* as saying, that "Episcopacy is a question of fact, to be determined by a sound interpretation of the sacred volume," do you suppose, Sir, that he meant to keep out of view the testimony of the Fathers to this fact, and to let it rest entirely on the words of scripture? *You* interpret the words of scripture one way, and *he* another—*You* make out Presbytery, and *he*, Episcopacy. Now, what method does common sense point out to determine which was the fact? Will it not tell us to consult those writers who lived in, or near, the apostolic age; and that to whichsoever their concurrent voice bears testimony, *that* must be pronounced to have been the fact? In what way would you prove to a *seventh-day baptist*, that the first day of the week is of apostolic institution? Would you rest it solely on the words of scripture? If *you* would, *I* would not; although I as firmly believe the change to have taken place by divine appointment, as you do. I can find nothing in the scriptures that looks like divine institution. There are indeed some intimations of that kind, when the passages are illustrated by the testimony of the Fathers to the fact; but if you set that testimony aside, there is not a passage that cannot be as rationally interpreted *without*, as *with* regard to that fact. And yet I have no doubt, that you would condescend, in this case, to appeal for the fact to the primitive writers, and tell the opposer of the institution, that a custom so early and so universal can be rationally ascribed to nothing but divine appointment, or what amounts to the same thing, to apostolic authority acting under divine direction. Whether you

would deserve the aid of the *venerable ancients* in this case, when you are so solicitous to exclude their testimony in the case of Episcopacy, I leave to every one who knows what the word *inconsistency* means.

I find, Sir, that you, as well as the author of *Miscellanies*, lay great stress upon the convertibility of the names Bishop and Presbyter; and you intimate that *Cyprian* and the *Layman* had recourse to policy, in trying to run down the argument with hard words. Policy! For what purpose? Did it require policy to prove, that because Presbyters are sometimes styled Bishops, it is contemptible sophistry to infer, that Timothy and Titus, who governed these Bishops, or Presbyters, were of the same order with them? I should think that *you* have more need of policy, and a very extraordinary degree of policy too, when you attempt to prove, that those who are governed, are equal to those who govern. Yet, I find that this sophistry is your *argumentum palmarium*,—the mighty weapon that is to demolish Episcopacy. You tell us, that "notwithstanding scowling, and scoffing, and laughing at it, it will not be so easily parted with, and in listening to a good word for it, the reader may begin to think it possible for a little sophistry to trill from other than Presbyterian pens."

To lay a foundation for this retort of sophistry upon Episcopalians, you take some pains to prove, by several quotations from scripture, that Presbyters are sometimes styled Bishops. You need not have taken the least pains to prove that point—it is conceded without reluctance. It is conceded too, that this identifies the Bishop or Overseer in the instances quoted, with the Presbyter; but does this prove that Timothy, who governed these *Overseers*, or *Bishops*, was not of a superior order? Here lies the fallacy—in this consists the "wretched sophistry." Presbyters, as having a portion of the flock to oversee, under their governors, may, according to the etymology

of the word, be called Bishops. But are these Presbyters who had committed to them an *oversight* of the laity only, equal in authority with him who had an oversight of both clergy and laity? Were those Presbyters who had not a supremacy in the government of the church—who had not the power of ordaining—who had no right to exercise any act of authority over a fellow Presbyter, equal in authority with those officers who had, merely from their being named Bishops or Overseers? Can a Presbyter in the present age, because he has the oversight of a congregation, and is therefore to that congregation a Bishop, be equal to him who has superior powers, and rules over both clergy and people? Can a Presbyter *now* have greater powers than he had in the apostolic age? Certainly not. Whatever rights he had then he has now, and no more. Let us then inquire, whether this Presbyter or Overseer had the power of ordination, and the supreme power in the government of the church committed to him? If he had, it follows, that there can be no officer in the church superior to him; if he had not, then parity of ministers is a novelty. This is the true way of bringing this dispute to an issue, and not that fallacious way of arguing from a community of names.

To come at the truth in this important controversy, let us consider the state of the Church of Ephesus. This indeed is very beaten ground, and it requires some degree of patience to say the same thing over and over again. *Cyprian* and the *Layman* have done ample justice to this part of the controversy; and I can add nothing of consequence to their judicious observations and strong arguments. But when our adversaries *will* have recourse to sophistry, we must point out clear facts to prove it to *be* sophistry, although these facts have been mentioned a thousand times before.

There were in the Church of Ephesus three orders of ministers; Timothy, the Presbyters, who are also called

Bishops or Overseers, and the Deacons. That Timothy was the ordaining officer in that church is beyond all contradiction. There is not a hint in the directions given to him on that point, to associate Presbyters with himself; but, on the contrary, it is evident that he was to be *supreme* and *single* in the discharge of this duty. It certainly is a very extraordinary thing, that when there was a number of Presbyters at Ephesus, St. Paul should put such a mark of reprobation upon Presbyterian government as to send an officer to ordain and govern that church, when those Presbyters were fully competent to the business. And what was their conduct on that occasion? Did they remonstrate against it? Did they oppose Timothy in the execution of his office? Not a hint of that in scripture, nor in all antiquity. What sort of men must those Presbyters have been? Certainly either fools who knew not their rights; or men who had such a superabundance of the "milk of human nature," that they could not bear the least contention, even in the sacred cause of truth and justice. What pity, Sir, that you had not lived at that time, and been one of the Presbyters of that church! I doubt very much whether Timothy would have felt himself upon a bed of roses. You could have put into the mouths of your fellow Presbyters, an argument that would have ruined the hierarchy for ever. "My brethren! this is a monstrous usurpation—a daring attempt to take from us the right of ordaining and governing in common council the whole flock at Ephesus. The Apostle certainly forgets himself; for by his own account of the matter, we are Bishops or Overseers of the flock. And yet he sends Timothy here to oversee *us*—to be a Bishop of Bishops. This is clearly the case; for his instructions are perfectly unequivocal. He *alone* has the power of ordaining—he is to govern all ranks among us, laity, Deacons, and even *us Bishops*. To this I cannot submit. I am a determined enemy to prelacy; and I advise, my brethren, that we all

enter into a *solemn league and covenant* to prevent its establishment in the Christian church." What do you think, Sir, Timothy would have said to you, had you reasoned and acted in this manner? Certainly his language would not have been that of approbation, but of reproof.

If it be necessary to set this matter in a clearer point of light, perhaps the following observations will do it. St. Paul sent from Miletus to Ephesus, and *called the elders of the church.* When they arrived the Apostle gave them this solemn charge—*Take heed, therefore, unto yourselves, and all the flock over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you Overseers, to feed the Church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood.*—Here is not the least intimation to these Presbyters, that their commission implied the power of ordaining. There is no mention of the qualifications requisite for the persons that were to be ordained—nothing, but to take care of their own conduct, and to feed with the word of life those over whom they were placed. But he gives very particular directions to Timothy concerning the persons whom he should ordain, both Presbyters and Deacons. Is it not wonderful, that St. Paul, when he was about to take his leave for ever of those Presbyters, did not say one word to them about so important a part of their duty as ordaining, if they possessed that power? Again—St. Paul charges Timothy, *not to receive an accusation against an Elder but before two or three witnesses;* but he gives no such charge to the Elders or Overseers of Ephesus. He also says to Timothy, *them* (meaning the Elders) *that sin, rebuke before all, that others also may fear.* Nothing can be more absurd than to suppose, that those Presbyters who were subject to the censures of Timothy, were possessed of equal powers with him. Had they refused to submit to the just censures of their governor, which, upon Presbyterian principles, they *ought* to have done, I doubt very much

whether their title of Bishop would have been of any service to them.

Further—St. Paul says to those Elders, that *some of themselves should arise, speaking perverse things to draw away disciples after them.* Now, one would suppose after mentioning this, that he would have told them how to proceed—would have directed them to receive an accusation against perverse Elders, and have charged them to rebuke such before all. But no such thing: they had no power of that sort committed to them. Besides, I cannot conceive how human ingenuity could have devised any thing more effectual, to make the Elders speak perverse things (if the word *perverse* could with propriety be used), than to send Timothy to take out of their hands the power of ordaining, and of governing the Church of Ephesus. And yet it seems you think all these difficulties and absurdities are as light as a feather, when put in the scale against your weighty argument from the community of names.

Once more—St. Paul gives a very solemn charge to Timothy, *I give thee charge in the sight of God who quickeneth all things, and before Jesus Christ, who before Pontius Pilate, witnessed a good confession, that thou keep this commandment, without spot, unrebukable, until the appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ.*

The Apostle had no expectation that Timothy would live till the day of judgment. This charge, therefore, was not confined to the person of Timothy, but extended to his office to the end of time. It was of the nature of that promise which Christ made to his Apostles, that he *would be with them to the end of the world.* But the charge given by the Apostle to the Elders of Ephesus was merely personal—it related to nothing beyond their own lives. As they had no power to constitute others in their room, so there is no charge given to them *to keep what was com-*

mitted to them to the coming of Christ, or *to commit what they had received to faithful men.*

It is now I think as clear as the great luminary of day, when not a cloud obscures his disk, that the Church of Ephesus, consisting of Presbyters, Deacons, and laity, were committed to the oversight, superintendance and government of Timothy; and that the title of Bishops given to the Presbyters of that church, as having a subordinate *oversight* of the laity under Timothy, in no respect or degree impaired his superiority. He was the Overseer of Overseers—the Bishop of Bishops. To the office which Timothy held, succeeded that order in the church to which, from the beginning of the second century, the title of Bishops has been appropriated, and not to the second order indifferently styled, in the apostolic times, Bishops or Elders. If our Bishops had succeeded to the second order, they could possess no more power than that order did; your argument would then be conclusive; but succeeding to the office of Timothy, to which *alone* the power of ordaining was attached, Presbyterian parity (to use your phrase, whether classical or not) "shows small"—it is absolutely annihilated.

That the office which Timothy held did not expire with him, is evident from its very nature; for there is the same need of an officer now in the church who can ordain, as there was in the days of Timothy; and accordingly, we find from the testimony of antiquity, that he had his successors, and that at the time of the council of Chalcedon, twenty-seven Bishops had governed that church. But with the Presbyterian hypothesis, all these circumstances are palpably inconsistent.

The Church of Crete will afford us another instance of Episcopal pre-eminence. But there is really no necessity of going over this ground. The instances of Timothy and Titus are so parallel, and rest so much upon similar authorities, that what has been said concerning the *former*, may

generally be applied to the latter. To the testimony from the epistle itself may be added, the concurrent testimony of the primitive writers, who assert that Titus was the first Bishop, or Chief Ruler of the Church of Crete.

The Church of Jerusalem furnishes a third instance of an officer superior to Presbyters. The officers of that church were James, the brother of our Lord, and a number of Presbyters and Deacons. I know that our adversaries evade the scripture proof of St. James' superiority over the Presbyters of Jerusalem, by saying, that the passages quoted by Episcopalians are not explicit and strong enough to be deemed decisive. But let the Church of Ephesus be kept in mind, and there can be no doubt that the Church of Jerusalem had the very same form, and that St. James exercised the same powers that Timothy did. If the former be a proof of *diocesan* Episcopacy, I think no reasonable man can doubt that the latter is so too. But although the powers exercised by James are not so particularly delineated as those exercised by Timothy, yet the texts in favour of James' superiority, are certainly stronger than those usually quoted in favour of the change of the Sabbath. Let any one compare two or three texts, which speak of the Apostles' meeting on the *first* day of the week for the purpose of religious worship, when we know that they met every day for the same purpose; and St. John's saying, that he *was in the Spirit on the Lord's-day*, which is as applicable to the *yearly* as to the *weekly* commemoration of our Saviour's resurrection; let him, I say, compare these slight hints with the following passages, and then let him decide this point. "Wherefore my sentence is, that ye trouble not those who from among the Gentiles are turned unto God." When Paul and his company were come to Jerusalem, "the brethren received him gladly; and the day following Paul went in with them unto James, and all the Elders were present." Again; Peter, after he had declared to the disciples to whom he went, his mira-

culous deliverance, bade them " go and show these things to James and to the brethren." And again; St. Paul says, that *certain came from James*, &c. Surely these are strong indications of superiority, and when you add the positive testimonies of the primitive church (the only testimonies upon which we can rely for the change of the Sabbath), we have all the proof that can reasonably be required. That we *have* the primitive writers in our favour, will admit of no dispute. The Apostles, to show that the rank which St. James bore in the Church of Jerusalem, was to be continued, according to our Lord's most gracious promise, *to the end of the world*, after James' death, appointed Simeon to the Episcopal chair. HEGESIPPUS, who was almost contemporary with Simeon, recorded (according to EUSEBIUS*), that after the destruction of Jerusalem, the Apostles and Christians who retired to Pella returned, and the *former* chose Simeon, the son of Cleophas, to be Bishop of that church. And from the same authority we learn, that Simeon lived to the great age of one hundred and twenty years, and died in the tenth year of Trajan's reign; that is, he lived till the beginning of the second century, which brings him near the time of HEGESIPPUS. The same historian gives us a list of Bishops who presided over the Church of Jerusalem, down to the reign of Adrian, making the number fifteen, and at the head of them places St. James. Besides HEGESIPPUS and EUSEBIUS, we have the testimonies of CLEMENS of Alexandria, of CYRIL, who, in the fourth century, was Bishop of Jerusalem, and, therefore, we may reasonably suppose, in possession of undeniable proof of the fact; of EPIPHANIUS, of AMBROSE, of JEROME, of CHRYSOSTOM, of AUSTIN, of OECUMENIUS, of THEOPHYLACT, besides the testimony of two hundred and eighty-nine Bishops in the sixth general council of Constantinople. What proof for

* Lib. iv. cap. 22.

any matter of fact can there be stronger than this? That Cæsar was killed in the senate-house, is not capable of more clear and decisive proof.

It is a matter of no consequence, whether St. James was one of the twelve or not. There are great names on both sides of this question, and I fear we may dispute till we are both heartily tired, without coming to a decision. I will take a shorter method—you may have your choice. If James *was not* one of the twelve, then we have an instance of the transmission of the apostolate by the hands of men; for James is expressly styled an Apostle;* but if he *was* one of the twelve, then we have an instance of an Apostle being a fixed Bishop, in opposition to your assertion, that it was inconsistent with the apostolic commission to be confined to any particular church.

I would observe, further, as James was an Apostle, either immediately by Christ, or mediately by man; and as it appears from the above quotation by Eusebius from Hegesippus, that Simeon, the son of Cleophas, by the appointment of several of the Apostles, succeeded to the Episcopal station and authority of James, it follows, that the apostolic commission was conveyed to Simeon, and that your assertion, that "no person could be vested with apostolic authority but by the immediate appointment of Christ," has no foundation in fact. Make then James which you will, either one of the twelve sent by Christ himself, or another James ordained by the Apostles to preside over the Church of Jerusalem, it will follow, that parity of ministers was not the institution of the Apostles, but that Episcopacy is coeval with the Christian church.

But this is not all the proof, that the apostolic commission was not to expire with the twelve. Barnabas is expressly styled an Apostle,† and we find him for some time travelling with St. Paul, and ordaining Elders in every

* Gal. i. 19. ii. 9. † Acts xiv. 14.

city. It has also, I think, been fully proved, that Timothy and Titus were invested with apostolic authority; for they alone in their respective churches ordained Presbyters, and governed both clergy and laity. They are also styled Apostles. The word indeed is translated *messengers*; but when we consider the powers they exercised, and that St. Paul styles them, "*the glory of the churches*," the propriety of translating the word *Apostles*, must, I think, be apparent. Junia and Andronicus also, in fair construction, must be deemed Apostles; for they are said to be *eminent* among the Apostles. And St. Paul tells us, that he was "an Apostle not of men, neither by man, but by Jesus Christ," which surely implies that there were, or might be, Apostles *by men*. Epaphroditus also, we say, was an Apostle.* This you deny. A little hesitancy, however, would not have been unbecoming, when you contradicted THEODORET, and other ancients, upon this point. If you could, without feeling the impropriety of it, or without one word of "soft relief," tell Cyprian, that you "entirely acquit him from the charge of sinning against knowledge," you ought, at least, to have allowed something to the talents and learning of your friend JEROME. He, according to Dr. CAMPBELL, "had more erudition than any person then in

* Dr. WHITBY, in a note on the second chapter of Philippians, 25th verse, has these words: "The word *Apostle* is never used in the New Testament, but either of those who were in the strict sense, *Apostles of the Lord*, or else were eminent ministers of the gospel. Thus Titus and Timothy are styled *Apostoloi*, Apostles, not because they were messengers, but because they were *fellow labourers* with St. Paul, and *the glory of the churches*. I therefore conclude with THEODORET upon the place, and upon chap. i. 1. that the Episcopal care of this Church was committed to Epaphroditus; and that this is the import of the word here; this being the note of the same THEODORET, who says that formerly they who are now called Bishops were styled Apostles; and HILARY the Deacon says, *erat enim eorum, Apostolus, ab Apostolo factus*, he was constituted their Apostle by an Apostle, that is St. Paul, who therefore commands them *to receive him in the Lord; for the sake of the Lord Christ*, whose minister he was."

the church—the greatest linguist, the greatest critic, the greatest antiquary of them all." Yet this great scholar and profound critic was so ignorant as to assert, that "by degrees, in process of time, others were *ordained Apostles* by those whom our Lord had chosen, as that passage to the Philippians shows, *I supposed it necessary to send unto you Epaphroditus your Apostle.*"* It seems then, that Cyprian's critical knowledge will not suffer much, your *ex cathedra* decision notwithstanding.†

To these proofs of the transmission of the apostolic commission, in the points of ordination and government, I beg leave to call your attention, in the course of your review, to the epistles addressed to the seven churches of *Asia Minor*. These have been brought forward by Cyprian with great perspicuity and fairness. His observations are an appeal to the common sense of mankind, and appear to me well calculated to produce conviction in every impartial mind. These epistles have always been very perplexing to

* 1 Tim. iii.

† It will be a hard matter to reconcile the above passage with original parity, which the advocates of that doctrine unfairly draw from a passage in JEROME's epistle to EVAGRIUS. If it be understood that Episcopacy was not introduced till after the Apostles' times, he cannot be vindicated from flatly contradicting himself, and all the other Fathers. What experiment of parity was there in the Church of Alexandria, if, as he says, from St. Mark's time, the Presbyters set up one above themselves, as an army making choice of a general? How was the Church of Jerusalem governed by a *common council* of Presbyters, when JEROME tells us St. James was the first Bishop? How, the Churches of Ephesus and Crete, when, according to him, Timothy and Titus were the first Bishops? How, at Rome, when he makes Linus and Clemens two of the Bishops of that Church? How, at Antioch, where he says Ignatius was Bishop? He also sets his seal to the genuineness of the Ignatian epistles, and no one can say, with truth, that any parity is to be found in them. Where then, in the name of candour and fair construction, is this common council of Presbyters to be found after the Apostles' times? JEROME gives no hint of the kind. He declares in the above quotation, that Episcopacy is of apostolic institution. Vain then must be the hope of aid from that quarter.

the advocates of parity. They cannot agree among themselves, in what sense to take the addresses. Even Dr. CAMPBELL condemns the fancies of some of his brethren, and yet he adopts, without being able to defend it (himself being judge), the notion of the Puritans of the seventeenth century. According to them, and the learned professor, the *Angels* of the seven churches were the *moderators* of seven congregational Presbyteries.*

To this the *Anti-jacobin Review* makes the following reply. "When our author resolved to adopt this notion of the Puritans of the seventeenth century, we wonder that his own good sense did not revolt from the hard treatment, with which the *Angels* of the churches of Pergamos and Thyatira were threatened. These men are described *by him that liveth and was dead*, as eminent for their good works, charity, service, steadfastness in faith and patience; yet they are both severely blamed, and the former threatened, for suffering in their respective churches false teachers, whom, if they were nothing more than *moderators*, they could not remove. Would it not have been very unjust to censure Dr. CAMPBELL, when moderator of the Presbytery or Synod of Aberdeen, for not removing from their charges such of the ministers as had taught the peculiar doctrines of Arminius? And shall we, for the sake of a novel hypothesis, which has not the shadow of support beyond our author's sentiment, attribute to the King of Kings, a species of conduct unworthy of men? God forbid!"†

The learned professor seems to be fully aware of the very inadequate account which Presbyterian writers give of this matter, and candidly acknowledges that his opinion "is only the most likely conjecture of all he has seen on this article, which," he owns, "does not admit so positive

* Eccles. Lect. vol. i. p. 156.

† Review for June, 1801, p. 121, 122.

a proof as might be wished." Now, I appeal to every reasonable man, whether *conjectures* and *fancies* are to be admitted in opposition to matter of fact; for that it is matter of fact, that these seven Angels were the Bishops (in the ecclesiastical sense) of the seven mentioned churches, all antiquity asserts; and Cyprian has given the names of those Bishops, and has shown that Polycarp, to whom Ignatius addressed one of his epistles, was, at that time, or nearly then, Bishop of Smyrna.

The addresses to the seven Angels are so inflexible to Presbyterian parity, that even the pertinacious BAXTER was forced to acknowledge, that "there were fixed Bishops in the time of St. John,"—an acknowledgment that would never have dropped from his pen, could his ingenuity have devised any way of evading the evidence which these epistles furnish.

In the course of your review, you have given us a long dissertation upon names—names absolute and relative, official and unofficial, general and particular. But to what purpose is all this? None at all, by your own account of the matter. You say, "abstractly considered, there is no inconsistency between our own doctrine of the identity of Bishops and Presbyters, and the Episcopal doctrine of a superior grade. For certainly it does not follow, from the nature of the thing, that because Bishop and Presbyter mean the same officer, therefore there is no other officer above him. But *as the facts stand*, the case is widely different; and the value of the argument from the scriptural titles lies here, that this superior order must be found among the Bishops and Presbyters, or not at all; because, with the exception of Deacons, these were the only ordinary officers in the apostolic church. If then *Bishop* is the same with *Presbyter*, the superior or prelatical order is absolutely unknown to the official language of the New Testament. Presbyters and Deacons we meet with in abundance, but not the shadow of a Prelate ever crosses our

path." Positive enough!—the point is now settled.—*Marcus dixit; ita est*—*

> "Did Marcus say 'twas fact? then fact it is:
> "No proof so valid, as a word of his."

But seriously, Sir, this is no bad specimen of the *quidlibet audendi*. "Not the shadow of a Prelate ever crosses our path!" Not the "shadow" of one in James, nor in Timothy, nor in Titus, nor in Barnabas, nor in the seven Angels in the churches of Asia Minor! Do you suppose, Sir, that we are such children as to admit an assertion which is not only destitute of proof, but which contradicts matter of fact? For if Timothy did not possess prelatical powers, taking in no evidence at all from the ancient Fathers, but confining ourselves solely to the scriptures, I should be very much at a loss to prove that the Archbishop of Canterbury does. Besides, let it ever be kept in mind, that Christ has expressly promised to preserve the apostolic commission in the church to the end of the world. "Lo! I am with you always, even unto the end of the world;" i. e. with the commission he had just given them.

I shall now sum up what has been said in this letter, in the words of that excellent writer, the author of *An original Draught of the Primitive Church*.

"The scriptures teach us, that when the Apostles had founded churches, they ordained Elders for them; entrusted those Elders to administer the word and sacraments amongst them, or (to use St. Paul's words to the Elders at Miletus) to *take care to themselves and all the flock over which the Holy Ghost had made them overseers*, by commission from the Apostles' hands, undoubtedly. The title suited with the charge and ministry entrusted to them; and as they were ecclesiastical officers, and commonly not novices in years, they were as properly called (in the an-

* Persius, sat. 5.

cient language of the synagogue) *Presbyters* too. And accordingly we find that title, as well as Bishop or Overseer, applied to them at that time. Yet all this while, nothing is plainer in scripture, than that the Apostles reserved to themselves the prerogative of a ruling power over them; kept a rod of discipline in their own hands; censured such as deserved it;* delivered unto satan the disorderly amongst them;† expected whole churches to be obedient to them in all things; in short, had the sovereign care of all the churches in their own hands. Moreover, all the Elders we read of, who were ordained in any church (before Timothy's and Titus' special commission) had the Apostles' hands laid upon them. This great prerogative then, the Apostles retained still; and no specious titles of *Presidents*, *Governors*, *Bishops*, *Pastors*, or the like, attributed to the Elders under them in the New Testament, lessened it in the least, or brought it into question; their superior character amongst them was owned by all. So that during their lives, or personal government over them, those titles might be promiscuously used for any of their subordinate ministers, of whom they ordained many in particular churches."

"But before the Apostles died, or when providence removed them from a personal visitation‡ of their several churches in this and the other province, we read in the earliest records of the church, that they ordained many single persons (taken notice of without any fellow Presbyters besides) over large cities and churches, committing to them (as Ireneus speaks) their *locus magisterii*, or place of government; and the scripture tells us plainly enough, that Timothy was ordained such a singular ecclesiastical Governor for Ephesus, where there were many Presbyters, and Titus for Crete; for it is plain they had a special

* 1 Cor. iv. 21. 1 Tim. i. 20. † 2 Cor. ii. 9. xi. 28.
‡ Rom. xv. 23.

commission to ordain Elders; to rebuke and censure *them* as well as others, and *that* with all authority; to judge of doctrine and reject heretics; in a word, *to set in order the things that were wanting;* the very claim of apostolic power in St. Paul's own words for it, (1 Cor. xi. 34) and he charges Timothy (and no other with him) *before God and the Lord Jesus Christ and the elect Angels* that he observed these things without partiality; as a special reason for investing him with all this fulness of power now, and for enjoining him so strictly to watch and make full proof of this his ministry; he concludes thus: *For I am ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand;* as if he had further said, and now this former care of mine must be yours."

"It is manifest, I think, from hence, that these singular presidents of the several churches had sundry parts of the Apostles' *reserved sovereign power* conferred upon them; never imparted to Presbyters of any denomination before, as far as scripture and primitive antiquity can inform us. These consecrated presidents then take possession of the churches assigned them, (as the case of many of them was) or with their full credentials to be sure. In all, or most of these great churches, which this apostolic institution had allotted for them, they must find Presbyters ministering at that time in such capacity as they all along had done, with entire subordination to the Apostles' supremacy over them. These ministering Presbyters then, together with the whole church, receiving such new commissioned presidents among them, must manifestly see by those reserved apostolical powers of *ruling*, *ordination*, *censure*, and the like (expressed in Timothy's and Titus' commission to the full, and no doubt of it, signified sufficiently to every church by the Apostles themselves, who thus placed them there), that they had an authentic and unquestionable right of succeeding, in the ordinary jurisdiction and prerogative of their *departing Apostle* over them."

"This is a plain and natural reason, why the first order of ecclesiastics in the primitive church were so familiarly called the *Apostles' successors*. No wonder then, if such apparent successors in that eminency of ecclesiastical power as they were, should be thought worthy of a distinct and singular title from all others, as the Apostles had before them; and that the Catholic Church did accordingly agree it should be so. The title of Apostle, indeed, was not thought unsuitable to them by many of the primitive writers. But, in a holy reverence to the blessed twelve, those very presidents declined the venerable title of Apostle; but amongst the several appellations common to many ecclesiastical offices before, they so appropriated that of Bishop to themselves, that *Ignatius* declares, at the very close of the apostolic age, 'every Christian church, to the very utmost bounds of all,' had a supreme governor of that singular and peculiar name, by which he was then known."

I think, Sir, it appears now, with great force of evidence, that there were three orders in the primitive church; Apostles, who ruled over all, Presbyters, or Overseers of a portion of the flock, and Deacons, who had an inferior ministry; and that the highest order of clergy, for ages styled Bishops, did not succeed to the Presbyters or overseers, but to the apostolic prerogative of ordaining ministers, and governing the church. This has been proved by several instances of persons who were not of *the twelve*, exercising apostolical powers, and from their being ranked with the Apostles, and called Apostles; so that the "value" of your argument from the convertibility of *Bishop* and *Presbyter*, is not that of a straw—it is, literally, "good for nothing." But you are very positive that "change of *names* presupposes change of things. This is the natural and necessary course of language. The contrary would reverse the operations of the human mind." Really, Sir! Is not the name of a thing ever changed, unless the thing itself has previously undergone a change? In what place were the

professors of Christianity first called Christians? "At Antioch." What were they previously called? "Among one another, *Disciples;* by their enemies, *Galileans*, *Nazarenes.*" Here then was a change of *name*, without any change of *thing*—no change in the profession of the disciples in any respect whatever. Again; What was the first name of the Christian Sabbath? "At first it had no distinctive name; after some time it was called the Lord's day." What was the common name in the second century? "Sunday." Here also there was no change in the thing. Further; What was the title of the first twelve sovereigns of Athens? "They were styled kings." What was the sovereign called after the death of Codrus? "He was called *Archon;* the Athenians judging, that no one could deserve the title of king after Codrus, who sacrificed his life for his country; but the power of the archon and the king was the same." To come nearer home: What was the title of Oliver Cromwell, who usurped the kingly power after the death of Charles I. "He was styled *Protector.*" And in our own times, have we not seen the supreme authority exercised by a king, afterwards by a first consul, and do we not now see it in the hands of an emperor? How strange then is it, that a scholar should commit himself, as you have done, in this and some other instances? History affords numerous instances of changes in titles of office, without any change in the power or authority of the office. For the truth of this, Dr. BENTLY, whose "critical learning, spirit, and fire," you so much extol, refers his infidel opponent to the *Notitia* of the Greek and Roman empires; and, as he had previously observed, there is "nothing in all this but what has happened in all languages and communities in the world." So that if we begin (to use your expression) "from father Adam," and come "down to this present A. D. 1807," we shall find Horace's observations just, *with* or *without* a change of things—

Multa renascentur, quæ jam cecidere; cadentq;
Quæ nunc sunt in honore vocabula, si volet usus.

If these remarks be just, you have rested the cause of *parity* upon a very weak foundation; but I believe it is full as strong as any you will be able to lay. With words, ingenuity may take liberties with some degree of plausibility; but facts are such stubborn things, that it requires wonderful art to weaken their force, and throw a shade over their evidence.

I shall say no more at present to your review of the "Essays on Episcopacy;" your next number will necessarily lead to farther discussion.

But before I conclude this letter, it may be well to take notice of your remarks upon the observations of PHILALETHES, in answer to Mr. OSGOOD. My strictures do not proceed from a pragmatical disposition, or from the *cacoethes scribendi*. Were PHILALETHES inclined to make a reply to your objections, he could do it better than I can. He is always competent to defend himself.

You give PHILALETHES due praise for his "urbanity, and neat simplicity of style." You also agree with him upon the point of succession, and upon the necessity of excluding from the sacred ministry all intruders and self-constituted teachers. You reprobate, and well you might, Mr. O.'s notions upon these points. If there be any certainty in any thing, they are inconsistent with scripture, and of very pernicious consequence. Against such notions, we, Episcopalians, set our faces in the most determined manner. We know something of ecclesiastical history, and of human nature; and by consulting these sources of information, we are fully convinced that Mr. O.'s ideas of church government, would totally ruin the Church of Christ. If doctrine be *all*, government is *nothing*. If to believe rightly constitutes a minister, we should have a very contemptible ministry; for men may

be very ignorant, and, at the same time, very orthodox. Besides the absurdity of confounding the qualifications for the ministry, with the office itself. In civil affairs, that respectable man, and sincere Christian, would not reason in this manner—he would see the weakness of it at once. In what school then, could he have been led so much astray? I cannot think that he has received such doctrines from the teachers on whom he attends. They, as well as we, have suffered much from such principles. The Church of Scotland, as well as the Church of England, has much to complain of, on this score.

It is really a pleasing circumstance, in traversing the field of controversy, to perceive that we can go part of the way hand in hand. So far, there is no difference between us: to this point—

Concidunt venti, fugiuntque nubes.

But, Sir, we must part at last—we have got to the *ne plus ultra* of coincidence. In what follows, I cannot acquiesce.

Against PHILALETHES' assertion, that we must have recourse to the testimony of the church for the authenticity of the scriptures, you enter your protest. You say, the assertion is "not only inaccurate, but also of most pernicious consequence. It will draw us into the magic circle of papal Rome, the church testifying to the scripture, and the scripture testifying to the church; that is, the scriptures declare the church to be infallible; and we cannot know the scriptures to be the word of God but by the testimony of the church; and so, old "mother church," very snugly proves her own infallibility by her own testimony." I really should not have expected this from your pen. Will any man that has the least skill in logic say, because we cannot prove the authenticity of the scriptures but by the testimony of the church, that, therefore, the church is infallible?

Is there any connection between the inference and the premise? No more than there is between, "Behold, Esau my brother is a hairy man," and, "Isaac begat Jacob." What! can we not prove from the testimony of the church, that the facts recorded in the scriptures are true, and that these holy records were written by the persons whose names they bear, without getting "into the magic circle of papal Rome?" If the scriptures do not say, that the church is infallible, how does the church, bearing testimony to their authenticity, lead us into this sophism? Here again, as in other instances, you *assume*, and then accommodate yourself with the desired inference. Let us put your argument into a syllogism, and we shall see at once the illegitimacy of your inference.

Whatever leads us into the magic circle of papal Rome is pernicious.—The assertion, that we must have recourse to the testimony of the church for the authenticity of the scriptures, leads us, &c.—Therefore the assertion, that we must have recourse, &c. is pernicious.

Now, Sir, is not this a pretty way of reasoning? You certainly know, that when one of the premises is doubtful, no certain inference can be drawn. The minor proposition is questionable; you should therefore have previously proved it, and by no means have assumed it. This is an essential rule of right-reasoning. And thus your first assertion, in opposition to PHILALETHES, proves perfectly nugatory.

It appears to me, that PHILALETHES asserts with great propriety, that the testimony of the church is the only testimony to the authenticity of the sacred books; by which he means, that the facts recorded in them are true. He might have added, that it is the only proof of their genuineness likewise. The former you deny, and you may, with equal propriety, deny the latter also. Well, Sir, let me ask you—How would you confute *Father* HARDOUIN, who endeavoured to prove, that the writings of several *ancient*

authors were forged by some monks of the thirteenth century, who gave to them the names of HOMER, PLATO, ARISTOTLE, PLUTARCH, &c? There is no possible way that I can conceive, but that of producing the testimony of the *learned* in all ages to their genuineness.* Suppose, Sir, an infidel should tell you, that the books of the *New Testament* were forged in the fourth century; would you reply, "that cannot be; for the spirit of truth testifies to the consciences of believers, independently of every sort of historical induction, that their *faith does not stand in the wisdom of man, but in the power of God?*" Might he not reply, "What is that to me? I am no believer; but I am willing to be so, provided you give me sufficient proof, that what you call the sacred writings were not forged." Would you not take the method that has ever been taken, to prove the authenticity and genuineness of writings of every kind? And what is that, but to adduce the testimony of those who lived *in* or *near* the times of the reputed authors?

* The Bishop of Llandaff begins his second letter to THOMAS PAINE in the following manner: "Before you commence your grand attack upon the Bible, you wish to establish a difference between the evidence necessary to prove the authenticity of the Bible, and that of any other ancient book. I am not surprised at your anxiety on this head; for all writers on the subject have agreed in thinking that ST. AUSTIN reasoned well, when, in vindicating the genuineness of the Bible, he asked—'What proofs have we that the works of PLATO, ARISTOTLE, CICERO, VARRO, and other profane authors, were written by those whose names they bear; unless it be that this has been an opinion generally received at all times, and by all those who have lived since these authors?' This writer was convinced that the evidence which established the genuineness of any profane book, would establish that of a sacred book; and I profess myself to be of the same opinion, notwithstanding what you have advanced to the contrary." The learned Bishop does not appear to have had the least conception of our Editor's mode of proving the authenticity and genuineness of the sacred writings—he never suggests any thing of that sort to his infidel opponent. No; he well knew that the mode was irrational, and contrary to the opinion of the learned; he therefore took care not to give his adversary a handle of that kind against him.

Every writer that I have ever read upon the subject, takes that method; and I am very certain, that infidels would laugh at your mode of defending the authenticity of the sacred writings. Let me put another case—Suppose you were disputing with an Arian about the genuineness of the text, in St. John's first Epistle, fifth chapter, and 7th verse —*For there are three that bear record*, &c. would you say, the text is undoubtedly genuine? "What! has God put his seal upon every work of his hand, from the *cedar of Lebanon to the hyssop that springeth out of the wall;* from the luminaries of heaven, down to the pebble of the brook; and has he not put his mark of authority on this sacred text?" I cannot believe that you would talk to him in this manner. You certainly would do, as *Archdeacon* TRAVIS has done, in his controversy with GIBBON, on this disputable text. You would show from manuscripts, and the testimony of the *ancients*, that the text was not interpolated; and if you could not do it in this way, you could not do it in any other. I beg your patience a little longer. If I mistake not, the first council which gave its sanction to the canon of scripture, was that of *Laodicea.** Suppose you had lived at that time, and had been a member of that

* By this it is not meant that the books which we now deem canonical were not so deemed before the council of Laodicea. "Whether that council," says Bishop WATSON in his answer to T. PAINE, "was held before or after that of Nice, is not a settled point. All the books of the New Testament, except the Revelation, are enumerated as canonical in the constitutions of that council; but it is a great mistake to suppose, that the greatest part of the books of the New Testament were not *in general use* amongst Christians long before the council of Laodicea was held." The Bishop then refers to MOSHEIM, who says, "the greatest part of the books of the New Testament were read in every Christian society throughout the world, and received as a divine rule of faith and manners. Hence it appears, that these sacred writings were carefully separated from several human compositions upon the same subject, either by some of the Apostles themselves who lived so long, or by their disciples and successors, who were spread abroad through all nations." Watson's Apology, Letter 9.

council. In the course of those observations which would necessarily be made in relation to the Epistle to the Hebrews, the second Epistle of St. Peter, the second and third of St. John, the Epistles of James and Jude, and the *Revelations* of St. John, would you have observed to the council, there is no need of examining the testimony of the church in regard to these writings? The spirit of truth certifies to my conscience, and, I presume, to the conscience of every member of this council, that these writings are the undoubted records of the divine will. We need not, therefore, investigate the subject any farther, but proceed to declare, that the books which have hitherto been considered as genuine and authentic, are worthy of all acceptation, and ought to be comprehended in the canon of holy scripture. Would you, I say, talk in this manner? I am sure your good sense would revolt at such a mode of decision, and that you would have taken the method which the council took, and which the *learned* have ever taken to decide a matter of fact.

This is the method which the Apostles themselves took to induce men to believe. They alleged, that competent testimony to Christ's life, and death, and resurrection, and miracles, was a sufficient ground of belief. St. John saith, "that which we have *seen*, and *heard*, and *handled*, declare we unto you." St. Peter declares, that he did "not deliver cunningly-devised fables," having been an *eye-witness* to what he asserts. St. Luke says, that *the things* [concerning Christ] were *surely believed*, because delivered by those who were *eye-witnesses and ministers of the word.* St. Paul asks, "How shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation, which, at the first, began to be spoken by the Lord, and *was confirmed unto us by them that heard them?*" The records which contain the doctrines of our Lord and his Apostles, were received as genuine and authentic by the first Christians; and have been handed down, pure and uncorrupted, to the present day. For this we have the

testimony of the church in every age; and in no other way can we prove it, let Dr. OWEN and Mr. HALIBURTON say what they will.

Your error upon this point, appears to me to proceed from your confounding the divinity of the scriptures, with their genuineness and authenticity. These are different things, but closely connected. PHILALETHES does not assert, that their *divinity* depends upon the testimony of the church, but their *authenticity*. When this point is settled by competent testimony, then way is made for the question concerning their divinity. The miracles recorded in the scriptures fully prove their divinity; for no one could do the works which our Saviour did, *unless God were with him*. But to these miracles, as matters of fact, the testimony of eye-witnesses is necessary. Accordingly, both Jew and Gentile, friend and foe, acknowledged upon this testimony, that Christ wrought miracles. What then is the result?—The scriptures are divinely inspired records; for God cannot set his seal to a lie.

We have indeed other evidences of the divinity of holy writ. Prophecy is a decisive proof; but then it is prophecy fulfilled, and that requires time. When first delivered, it is no proof at all. The internal evidences likewise have their weight; but I think no judicious defender of revelation, would rest its truth upon them alone. The two grand pillars which support the edifice, are miracles and prophecies; but the authenticity of the books which record them, must be proved by competent testimony.

A person, fully satisfied of the truth of revelation upon these rational grounds, and believing with the heart unto righteousness, would indeed, from his own experience, from the happy influence of the sacred word upon his heart and life, from the support it would afford him under affliction, and from the delightful hope of eternal happiness, with which it would inspire him, stand in no farther need of "historical induction" to support his faith. He would

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then know, that it was firmly grounded "in the power of God," gradually forming him for that happy state, in which faith will be lost in beatific vision, and hope in everlasting fruition.

These, Sir, are the sentiments which I have formed upon this subject. They are by no means coincident with yours; but I am pretty certain they *are* with those of the ablest defenders of Christianity. Upon rational ground I cannot see that it can be any other way defended; and I hope you would not wish to defend it upon any other ground.

A CHURCHMAN.

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1. Hobart, John Henry, bp., 1775–1830. Companion for the altar. 2. Episcopacy. 3. Mason, John Mitchell, 1770–1829. I. Title. 4. Hobart, John Henry, bp., 1775–1830. Essays on Episcopacy.

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